

Sociology of art: basic English language books

Becker, Howard. Art Worlds. Berkeley: U of California Press, 1982. A foundational essay presenting a descriptive analysis of the social network necessary for art works to exist.

Chaplin, Elizabeth. Sociology and Visual Representation. New York: Routledge, 1994. Dense but well-presented consideration of social analysis of visual culture. Each chapter is an extended introduction to and commentary on key texts.

Gans, Herbert J. Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste. 1999. Now somewhat dated, but classic, exposition of taste cultures in the US c. 1970. New updated edition, 1999.

Wolff, Janet. Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983. Set up as a debate of opposing positions: aesthetic analysis of art vs. sociological analysis.

---. The Social Production of Art. second ed. New York: New York University Press, 1993. Broad overview of the issues defining the sociology of art; excellent summary of key issues.

Zolberg, Vera L. Constructing a Sociology of the Arts. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press. Up-to-date survey of sociology of art. Excellent; reliable.